

Articles and Sermons :: The Daily Exercise of God's Most Holy and Sacred Word**The Daily Exercise of God's Most Holy and Sacred Word - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2006/10/16 13:52**

by John Knox
(1505-1572)

The following passage is excerpted from a letter written by John Knox in 1557 before leaving Scotland for exile in Geneva. Knox addressed the letter to "His Brethren in Scotland," that is, Christ's brethren, the Church. The complete letter appears in the new edition of the Selected Writings of John Knox: Public Epistles, Treatises, and Expositions to the Year 1559, printed by Presbyterian Heritage Publications: Dallas, 1995. Knox's epistle bears the original subtitle "A most wholesome counsel how to behave ourselves in the midst of this wicked generation, touching on the daily exercise of God's most holy and sacred word." We excerpt two portions of Knox's letter on matters particularly relevant to our congregation. This part of the letter addresses the duty of the head of the household to read and discuss the Bible with his family:

Dear brethren, if you look for a life to come, of necessity it is that you exercise yourselves in the book of the Lord your God. Let no day slip or want some comfort received from the mouth of God.

Open your ears, and he will speak even pleasant things to your heart. Close not your eyes, but diligently let them behold what portion of substance is left to you within your Father's testament. Let your tongues learn to praise the gracious goodness of him, whose mere mercy has called you from darkness to life. Neither yet may you do this so quietly that you admit no witness. No, Brethren, you are ordained of God to rule your own houses in his true fear, and according to his word.

Within your houses, I say, in some cases, you are bishops and kings; your wife, children, servants, and family are your bishopric and charge. Of you it shall be required how carefully and diligently you have instructed them in God's true knowledge, how you have studied to plant virtue in them, and repress vice. And therefore I say, you must make them partakers in reading, exhorting, and in making common prayers, which I would in every house were used once a day at least.

But above all things, dear brethren, study to practice in life that which the Lord commands, and then be you assured that you shall never hear nor read the same without fruit. And this much for the exercises within your homes.